

Open Report on behalf of Heather Sandy, Interim Director of Education

Report to:	Lincolnshire Schools' Forum
Date:	24 January 2019
Subject:	Building Communities of Specialist Provision: Update

Summary:

The purpose of this report is to update forum members on the progress of the Building Communities of Specialist Provision Strategy. The report will briefly outline the vision for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities education provision to be implemented over the next 5 years, including details of the prescribed alterations for each of the special schools. The report will also provide a summary of progress made by the associated work streams which will support the implementation of the strategy.

The full, approved strategy can be viewed in Appendix A, to support this report.

Recommendation:

The Schools' Forum is asked to note the content of the report.

Background

The proposed Building Communities of Specialist Provision Strategy was presented to Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee and Executive Council in December 2017 for approval to engage in public consultation. After extensive discussion, approval was granted to engage in public consultation on both the strategy and the proposed individual school changes cited within.

Consultation on both the strategy and the proposed school changes within was held from January 2018 to March 2018 and provided fair and ample opportunity for interested parties to make representations.

Once the informal consultation period had been completed the outcome, which indicated strong support for the strategy, was shared with the associated academies to inform the required decision making processes as outlined in DfE Guidance "Making significant changes to an existing academy" March 2016. In response to the outcome of their individual school consultations, all academies submitted business cases to change designation (and expand and amalgamate,

where appropriate) and these were approved by the Regional Schools Commissioner in July 2018.

In July 2018, the Executive Councillor was asked to consider the outcome of the informal consultation period and grant approval to engage in statutory consultation for the 3 LA maintained schools, in accordance with DfE Guidance "Making prescribed alterations to maintained schools" April 2016.

Approval was granted to commence the statutory representation period throughout September 2018 for the LA maintained special schools. No representations were raised and therefore, approval for the final strategy was sought from the Executive.

In November 2018, the Executive was asked to consider the outcome of all consultation opportunities and make their final decision regarding the strategy, with formal approval obtained on 6 November 2018.

School Changes

The strategy requires all special schools to make significant changes to the type of need catered for and expansion where this has been identified and these are outlined in detail below.

Academy Alterations

The following changes to Academies have been considered and approved by the Head Teacher's Board and the Regional Schools Commissioner in July 2018:

St Lawrence School, Horncastle	
Significant Change	Change to need catered for: from MLD/SLD to All Needs. Increase in capacity from 80 to 150.
Implementation Date	Sept 2021
St Bernard's School, Louth	
Significant Change	Change to need catered for: from SLD/PMLD to All Needs. Increase in capacity from 88 to 100.
Implementation Date	Sept 2022
The Eresby School, Spilsby	
Significant Change	Change to need catered for: from SLD/PMLD to All Needs. Increase in capacity from 64 to 84.
Implementation Date	Sept 2020
The Sandon School and Ambergate Sports College, Grantham	
Significant Change	Amalgamation to one school across 2 sites. Change to need catered for: to All Needs across one school from a SLD/PMLD school and an MLD/SLD school.

	Increase in capacity from 152 to 229.
Implementation Date	Sept 2021
The Priory School and The Garth School, Spalding	
Significant Change	Amalgamation to one school across 2 sites. Change to need catered for: to All Needs across one school from a SLD/PMLD school and an MLD/SLD school. Increase in capacity from 128 to 177.
Implementation Date	Sept 2022
The John Fielding School, Boston	
Significant Change	Change to need catered for: from SLD/PMLD to All Needs. Relocation Increase in capacity from 56 to 140.
Implementation Date	Sept 2021
Gosberton House Academy, Gosberton	
Significant Change	Change to need catered for: from ASD/SLCN to All Needs.
Implementation Date	Sept 2023

Warren Wood and The Aegir School (Mayflower Specialist Academy Trust) already meet All Needs across both schools so no business case has been submitted as there are no significant changes required to either school.

Maintained School Alterations

The following school alterations have been approved by the Executive, following the formal representation period:

St Francis School, Lincoln	
Prescribed Alterations	Change to need catered for: from PD/PMLD to All Needs. Increase in number of places from 128 to 173.
Implementation Date	Sept 2021

St Christopher's School, Lincoln	
Prescribed Alterations	Change to need catered for: from MLD/SLD/ASD to All Needs.
Implementation Date	Sept 2023

Willoughby School, Bourne	
Prescribed Alterations	Change to need catered for: from SLD/PMLD to All Needs. Increase in number of places from 80 to 148.
Implementation Date	Sept 2020

The Strategy

In March 2017, the Department for Education announced the High Needs Strategic Review, instructing all LA's to review provision for pupils with SEND in order to ensure that there are sufficient good school places which meet the changing needs of pupils with SEND. The review required LA's to work in close collaboration with special schools and parent and carer groups to co-produce a strategic plan which delivers sustainable, good quality provision to meet current and future needs.

Locally, Education Leaders recognised significant challenges within the existing provision and all agreed that the status quo could not remain. Increased demand on a limited number of school places, excessively long journeys for a significant number of pupils, the potentially detrimental impact of some Out of County placements on families and the need for significant improvements to some Special school buildings have all led to sector leaders identifying the need for change.

A shared response was required to these significant challenges and collaboration of School Leaders and the Parent/Carer Forum was identified as the foundation for developing an effective solution. With a commitment to developing a sustainable, inclusive and localised special education system, Special School Leaders, Lincolnshire Parent Carer Forum (LPCF) and the LA co-produced the Building Communities of Specialist Provision Strategy and have formed a collaboration to oversee the strategy's implementation, known as the Lincolnshire SEND Alliance (LSA).

The strategy will make significant changes to the existing special education provision, creating an integrated and sustainable school system where pupils can attend their nearest special school, confident that their education and health needs can be fully met.

In order to achieve this ambition, the strategy will provide a locality-based, sector-wide approach to special education which would enable all special schools to meet the wide range of needs of pupils in their local community. As existing special schools are designed to meet specific designations of need, each school would be required to change its designation to enable them to meet All Needs. In addition, the strategy will increase the special school estate by over 500 places to address the growing demand, through significant capital investment to support expansion, where there is an identified need. The allocated capital investment would be utilised to improve premises and facilities, enabling each school to offer places to pupils from within their local communities with All Needs. The strategy also proposes establishing special school satellite provision within mainstream schools where pupils on the special school roll could be individually supported to access the mainstream curriculum and social opportunities.

In addition to the alterations to the existing special schools, the council has submitted an application to the DfE for a new free school, to be situated in Lincoln City, to meet the increasing demand for special school places in this

area. This increased capacity would also help to address the significant overcrowding at Lincoln St Christopher's School and allow the proposed building work to be completed on this site with minimum impact of current pupils. The LA's application for a new free special school was submitted on 15 October 2018 and the outcome will be announced in Spring 2019. Subject to further opportunities to bid for an additional free school and subject to the criteria for free school being met; the strategy proposes to apply for a new special free school in North Kesteven to ensure that all localities across the county have access to sufficient special school places.

Funding Allocations

Amount	Source
£25.1m	Maintenance Grant
£3.2m	Basic Need Grant
£0.84m	Internal Capital
£2.852m	DfE SEND Capital
£2.525m	Condition Improvement Fund (CIF)
£16.12m *	Future Basic Need Grant (* indicative)
£50.637m	

A Capital funding allocation of £34.517m has been earmarked to the project. The future basic need allocation is indicative at this stage, as allocations are only provided for the next 3 years. The amount determined is based on the LA capital return for 2021/22 and 2022/23 and final funding allocations will be subject to confirmation from central government.

The Council is firmly committed to implementing this strategy to improve the lives of pupils with SEND and their families whilst recognising there is a financial risk due to future basic need being indicative. The risk is understood, and the funding requirements have been identified through the LA capital return submission and are substantiated through the strategy to increase the special school estate by over 500 places.

Community Inclusive Trust have already contributed over £2.5m through a successful CIF bid, and all other Academy Trusts have committed to ensuring all future CIF bids are consistent with the vision outlined in the strategy. There are currently 3 CIF bids being developed in line with the wider strategy for submission in the next round of applications.

The Government treasury announced increased investment for SEND, including further SEND capital opportunities, in December 2018. This includes the approval of all "strong" free school bids in the current wave, to which Lincolnshire has submitted their application. The council will monitor all additional funding opportunities closely and ensure it is in the strongest position possible to access additional funding contributions when the opportunity arises.

Additional funding to support the implementation of the SEND vision has been identified from the Dedicated Schools Grant. These one-off brought forward monies will be utilised to develop the revenue elements of the strategy including

implementation of the workforce development framework, and supporting schools with planned growth in places.

Work Stream Progress

The implementation of the strategy is supported by five work streams addressing the key areas of development required. Membership of each work stream consists of sector experts working collaboratively to ensure that the strategy can be effectively implemented and sustained.

Design Work Stream

The purpose of the design work stream is to develop a robust and seamless education system for pupils with SEND, which ensures the right education is available in the right place at the right time, as close to home as possible.

Group membership consists of sector expertise from mainstream and special schools, early years, further education and local authority SEND Team.

2 workshops have been facilitated which have focused on reviewing the existing SEND system and identifying areas for development. It was agreed that the initial stages of the SEND process work effectively and do not require further enhancement. The group is currently focusing on addressing areas of challenge particularly related to transition stages or where there was conflict in the system and how schools (both mainstream and special) can ensure pupils in their localities are receiving the right education in the right setting.

The next work stream meeting, planned for February 2019, will focus on the design of the special school satellites and how these will provide special school pupils with improved access to mainstream opportunities.

Property, Resources and Finance Work Stream

The purpose of this work stream is to establish a consistent and equitable schedule of accommodation for the special school capital programme. Membership includes Special School Leaders, LCC Corporate Property and Finance Officers.

The work stream has so far established a full schedule of accommodation for each school which determines the extent of capital remodelling and redevelopment to be provided. The group is currently developing room data sheets for each type of room in the schools and will also be considering the external requirements for the schedules at the next meeting in February 2019.

Health Work Stream

The purpose of the health work stream is to establish a robust, collaborative health offer which can be accessed by all special school pupils. At present, there is an inequality in special school access to health and therapy provision and this needs to be addressed to ensure equity across the county, as the pupil profile changes.

This work stream is chaired by the Chief Commissioning Officer, Children's Health, LCC and membership consists of Special School Leaders, Service Manager – SEND and the Children's Integrated Health Team who all bring expertise and cross-agency collaboration.

The Children's Integrated Health Team has researched models of Health Offers being provided to special schools across the country to ascertain possible models which could be adopted for Lincolnshire. There are a variety of established models, some of which are centred around integrated nursing teams with Therapists and Paediatricians working in locality hubs that interact with schools. These models have been used to agree a set of key principles; the team now will explore their feasibility with providers with the aim of presenting a final model for approval.

Workforce Development Work Stream

A collaborative and coordinated approach to workforce development is essential if the special school sector is to provide All Needs education to pupils with SEND in their local communities. The move to All Needs education in Lincolnshire will undoubtedly present challenges for teaching and non-teaching staff as special schools accept pupils with a wider range of needs and greater complexities. LCC have committed revenue funding from the Dedicated Schools Grant to implement the strategy, including a workforce development framework which will include a graduated approach to SEND training and a learning forum offering opportunities to share best practice.

Whilst recognising the level of experience and specialism which already exists in Lincolnshire special schools, this work stream utilises sector-expertise through both the special schools and Lincolnshire Teaching School's Together (LTT) to enhance the provision for pupils with SEND. Plans are in place for the workforce development framework to be led by a partner from within the LTT and this will be developed as the strategy is implemented. In addition, Special School Leaders from both specialist schools in the county, St Francis Special School (Physical Disability/Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities) and Gosberton House Academy (ASD Specialist) have committed to supporting workforce development across the sector in their specific areas of expertise. Group membership also includes a number of sector experts from mainstream schools, early years and further education to ensure the needs of the whole sector are being addressed.

Social, Emotional and Mental Health Work Stream

The purpose of this work stream is to develop a system of support and provision for pupils with specific SEMH needs that is high quality, evidence-based, collaborative and tailored to meet the complex needs of pupils in a clear and coherent way. The provision must be flexible and coherent across transitions ensuring that children and young people with SEMH and their families have confidence as they move between the various phases and stages of education and, eventually, into adulthood. Chaired by the LA SEND Head of Service, membership of the group draws on sector expertise from specialist SEMH schools, LA Officers Children's Services and independent education and support providers.

The group has established an agreed action plan and is currently focusing on mapping and data analysis so there is a clear understanding of the existing cohort of pupils and support provision available, with a view to a gaps analysis being conducted to drive the strategic direction.

The SEMH work stream will be collaborating closely with the work force development work stream as a key area of development identified is the confidence of teaching and non-teaching staff to meet the needs of pupils with SEMH.

Conclusion

Approval of this exciting and aspirational strategy, and the £50m capital investment programme which accompanies it, has been well received locally and nationally. Positive reinforcement has been received through the Local Area SEND Inspection along with approval from the DfE. The work undertaken by Lincolnshire Parent Carer Forum, collaborating on the strategy, has been highlighted as a "Wow" moment by their national forum and was presented to Nadhim Zahawi, Undersecretary of State for Children and Families who subsequently praised Lincolnshire's vision.

Implementation of this strategy will take place over the next five years with the final school changes being made in September 2023. The SEND Project Office will seek to provide regular updates to the Schools Forum as implementation progresses.

a) Have Risks and Impact Analysis been carried out??

NA

b) Risks and Impact Analysis

Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report

Appendix A	Building Communities of Specialist Provision Together in Lincolnshire – A Strategy for Children and Young People with SEND
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Background Papers

None.

This report was written by Eileen McMorrow, who can be contacted on 01522 552632 or Eileen.mcmorrow@lincolnshire.gov.uk.